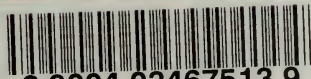


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House of Commons Debates.

SPEECH OF THE HON. EDWARD BLAKE

ON THE

ADDRESS

IN ANSWER TO THE

SPEECH FROM THE THRONE

Delivered in the House of Commons, at Ottawa, on Friday, Jan. 30th, 1885.

Mr. BLAKE. I have to congratulate my hon. friends who have just addressed the House on the manner in which they have discharged their somewhat difficult and onerous task. It is true that we observed at some stages slight signs of hesitation, but upon the whole, if I were asked to say in what particular branches of the art of oratory they have most shown their abilities to-day, I should say it was in the euphemistic and the hyperbolic departments. We have heard an account of the country, of its progress and prosperity, of its general condition, which we should be only too glad if we could to adopt as correct, but which, unfortunately, from the point of view from which we look at that condition, from the facts which are visible to our eyes, from the facts which reach our ears, we are utterly unable to assent to; and I must repeat my congratulations to my hon. friends, having undertaken the task of seconding and of bettering the expressions in the Speech, that they have been able to go through their business with so much gallantry, and, upon the whole, with so little hesitation. I am sorry that we are met so late. I had hoped that after the promise made the Session before last, and which was very measurably kept last Session, we should have adhered to the notion of coming here as soon as our friends and colleagues from the most distant parts of the

Dominion could reach Ottawa, after passing their Christmas week at home. I believe that is the most convenient time for the discharge of the legislative business of the Dominion, and it is a very important thing for us that that business should be discharged at the period at which it can, with the least inconvenience to the country and to the members who compose the Legislature, be fulfilled. I trust that we shall not on future occasions go further into the year than to-day, but rather that our future Sessions may commence at the time at which the hon. gentleman brought us together at last year, if not a few days earlier. I join in the congratulations which have been addressed to the House in the gracious Speech, and referred to slightly by the hon. gentlemen who have moved and seconded the Answer, as to the abundant harvest which, no doubt, has been a very great blessing. I have not observed upon this occasion a repetition of those further eulogies with reference to harvests which have accompanied some former Ministerial utterances upon that subject. I recollect very well the occasion of a Ministerial demonstration in the western part of this province a few years ago—I think in honor of the Minister of Public Works—when a then member of Parliament representing an Ontario constituency, declared that

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he had voted for, and intended to support, the Government that had raised the price of wheat from 77 cents to \$1.40. He did, I admit, vote for and support that Government, whether upon those or other grounds I know not. He was faithful, and he has received his reward. He no longer adorns those benches, at least during the sitting of the House, but he receives a handsome salary for inspecting the Colonization Companies of the North-West. I dare say, under similar circumstances, some other hon. members, with similar expectations, may be induced to say that the price of wheat is to day satisfactory; but that stretch of audacity has not yet prevailed in this House. And we are told besides, in effect, that we are enjoying commercial prosperity as well as a good harvest; and the hon. member for Beauce (Mr. Taschereau), several times felicitated us upon the condition of the country. He opened his speech with felicitating us on our general prosperity, and he said he could not do better than close it with a repetition of the same felicitation. It is admitted, indeed, that we have a share a slight share, a modest share, hardly worth mentioning, to be mentioned only in a whisper at all events, in the depression which is said to prevail in the neighboring Republic and also in Great Britain. But we are told that we are ever so much better off than they are—the great exemplars of Free Trade on the one hand, and of Protection on the other. We have, I presume, reached the happy medium with respect to our fiscal policy. We are, I suppose, just right. They protect too much in the United States, and so their depressions are deeper; they protect too little in England, and so their depressions are deeper; but happy Canada, its financial destinies presided over by the hon. gentleman who smiles so blandly upon me, and who, no doubt, would smile in the same way on a platform in St. John, if he happened to be there to-day,—I say happy Canada has found the medium. She neither indulges in Free Trade nor does she indulge in Protection, and so, by

consequence of that the depression is ever so much lighter. But there is a depression. It is now acknowledged. It was faintly denied last year. I remember, two or three years before, the hon. Minister of Finance prophesied—standing as he does on a great eminence, with means and sources of information not available to the general public, responsible as he is, at least to the extent of giving the tone and turn to public opinion, which is important in these respects—he prophesied, I say ten years of prosperity, and invited those who might trust in him to clap on all sail for that time and then to take it in. Last year he offered us a modified prosperity. Three years had elapsed so he did not offer us the ten years then; but he gave us seven years to date from last Session. It was not absolute prosperity either, it was not an all-sail kind of prosperity; you were to take in a reef or two, and if only you took in a reef or two and were prudent you would get seven years of prosperity. Well, we have had one year of the hon. gentleman's half-breed prosperity; we have had one years of going under reduced canvas, and I am afraid in too many instances with masts gone and running under jury masts, and in some other instances with wrecks on divers rocks and reefs, some of which were created by the hon. gentleman himself. I say we have had that little time, and now we are told that there is depression, but that it is only a modified depression. What a contrast that is to the ten years of full-sail prosperity, and even to the seven years of modified prosperity promised last year! What a contrast the condition of the country presents in the light of the promises made by the hon. gentleman just before the General Election of 1882! What do we hear to-day of the increasing industries which were to be established, provided he secured the verdict which the hon. gentleman solicited and which he obtained upon the faith of those fallacious promises made in 1882? The hon. the First Minister speaking in Toronto, said :—

“I tell you this, and this is not a matter of supposition but of certainty and knowledge on

my part, that there are millions of dollars waiting to be invested in Canada, millions in England and large sums in the United States waiting to be invested in every kind of industry, in mines and manufactures of every kind."

And then a little later he said:—

"All that is wanted by capitalists in Canada, England, and the United States, aye, in France and Germany, is to learn whether the country is of the fixed, constant opinion that the National Policy shall be continued as settled in 1878."

He promised us, not as a matter of speculation, not as a matter of expectation, not as a matter of belief, not as a matter of calculation, as were the hon. Finance Minister's promises of continued prosperity, not as a matter of supposition, but of certainty and knowledge, that if he got the verdict which a few weeks afterwards he did get, we should see not merely a continuance of the existing industrial activity, not merely a continuance of existing industrial investments, but an enormous influx of capital in addition, to be invested in various industries. Where are they? I ask again, where are those millions which the hon. gentleman certified to us as a matter of absolute certainty and knowledge would be here if he was retained in power? The gracious Speech assures us that our commercial prosperity rests upon foundations which no temporary or partial disturbance can remove. There is a sense in which I agree to that proposition. I am glad to do so, because I do not desire to move an amendment to the Speech. There is a sense, I say, in which I agree to that proposition. Such commercial prosperity as in this country we can enjoy does rest on permanent foundations. It rests on the land and on the sea. It rests upon the fertility of the soil, upon our agricultural products, upon our great timber resources, upon our minerals, upon our ships, upon our fisheries; but important and large as all these interests are, it rests, and will for many generations mainly rest in Canada, upon the land. And it depends, these being the foundations, upon the well applied energy and industry of our people

and the frugality of their expenditure. If those energies and abilities and that frugality are properly applied we shall grow in trade, commerce and manufactures. But the hon. gentleman obviously reads the Speech in another way. It is not upon these great foundations to which I have referred, which the hon. Finance Minister may indeed shake, with which he may indeed to some extent interfere, but it is upon Acts of Parliament that he thinks our trade and commerce and prosperity depend. We had, circumstanced as we are, having gone through a very long period of liquidation, of depression, of economy, during which all the weak houses in business were eliminated, and having made a fresh start a very little while ago, we had in the natural and ordinary course of things a right to expect, not indeed the Finance Minister's promised ten years' duration of prosperity, but we had a right to expect a very considerable number of years of extraordinary prosperity. That is what past events, and the experience of different commercial countries, would have indicated to us. What we got was a too brief gleam of prosperity. What we obtained by the hon. gentleman's arrangement was not an increased permanence of that prosperity but an abbreviation of it. It has been lessened and contracted, its term has been shortened, and difficulties have been created by the system which he lauds as itself the very foundation of prosperity. How has this been done? Disturbances the hon. gentleman speaks of. He talks of temporary and partial disturbances. There have been disturbances not very partial but pretty general—not very temporary, for they have lasted a good while. There have been disturbances which he has created. There has been the disturbance of a high and excessive taxation. There has been the disturbance of an unequal, and unjust taxation. There has been the disturbance of a sectional taxation. There has been the disturbance of an unnecessary amount of taxation. There has been an unnecessary withdrawal of the people's

earnings from the conduct of the people's business. There has been a diversion and a lockup of money, causing in many cases an entire loss and annihilation of capital as an effect of his policy. There has been great inflation and speculation promoted by the hon. gentleman's policy. There has been an unnatural stimulus administered to certain favored industries, giving to them a brief opportunity of fleecing the public by the higher rates they were enabled to charge while they were practical monopolies, and producing the natural, inevitable, predicted results at a time even earlier than we might have expected them. These disturbances are due not to visitations from on high; they are due not to the natural difficulties of our situation. They are due to the action of this Government and the preceding and present Parliament. It is natural, under the circumstances to which I have alluded, that the hon. gentleman should propose to press upon our attention a bankruptcy or insolvency law. It is the natural outcrop of his policy. He has delayed it as long he could, but he feels that the situation is so serious that that measure must be brought into the prominence which all measures receive when they are introduced in the Speech from the Throne. We are told that Canadian boards of trades and English chambers of commerce alike have pointed out the necessity of such a measure. We were quite familiar with the views of Canadian boards of trade. They have been pressed upon us for more than one Session past. Strong representations have been made by the principal boards—the Montreal board, the Toronto board—and, I think, one of the hon. gentlemen from Montreal introduced last Session a Bill, based on a report or proposal by the board of trade of his city, and we know the active course which has been pursued by some of our western boards. They did not produce much effect; but I observe by the papers that the First Minister has taken a trip to the other side of the water and has seen there some of the English chambers of commerce. The Finance Minister has also seen them, and I am glad to know that their representa-

tions have had more effect than the representations of our home-made boards of trade, and that they have given so much attention to the subject as is involved in suggesting its consideration in the Speech. The First Minister, indeed, in that country, in which it seems there is something in the air—I do not know what it may be—which makes our tongues wag a little wildly sometimes, told one of the Chambers he addressed, that ours was principally a rural population, with the prejudices of a rural population; that we members naturally represented those prejudices ourselves, and that of course there were difficulties in passing such a law. If, said he, we were an urban population, if we had the superior intelligence and knowledge of affairs which belong to urban populations, there would be no difficulty in the matter; but having only poor homespun country people for our constituents and representing them in this House, there were difficulties in carrying out the measure. However, he intimated that he would do what he could with us; he would do his best to open our eyes and remove these scales of prejudice from our vision. And I suppose he has satisfied himself that his influence is so great, and indeed I observe that the Secretary of State has said of him that the phrase is appropriate, "*l'état c'est moi*,"—that he can do what he will—I suppose from the utterances from the hon. gentleman that he has decided that he can do what he will in this matter. Now there were glorifications on this subject some time ago when, after a long period of depression, the threat of the removal from the Statute Book of the existing Bankruptcy Bill had frightened all the weak houses into, in some cases, premature assignments. We had pointed out to us as the effect of the policy of the Administration the short bead roll of bankruptcies and insolvencies when they were something between six and eight millions a year for a period of three years. In 1883 they became heavy, though not so heavy as in the old days, and they became very heavy in 1884. The list of liabilities for 1883 was

about \$15,900,000 while for 1884 they were about \$19,000,000, and these figures become still more remarkable when we look at the divisions as to the bankruptcies by Provinces. Quebec has fared much better in this regard in 1884 than in 1883. The Province of Manitoba has fared better still, for if I rightly recollect its insolvency liabilities amounted to only about one-fourth of the liabilities for the year before. But the other Provinces, Ontario, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island, present very different features. The liabilities for Ontario, in 1883, are stated at \$4,700,000; for 1884, \$9,600,000. Nova Scotia, 1883, \$1,075,000; 1884, \$2,075,000. In New Brunswick, 1883, \$750,000; 1884, \$1,675,000. Prince Edward Island, 1883, \$40,000; 1884, \$150,000. In all cases I have given the round figures, and they make a gross result for 1883 in these four provinces of \$6,550,000, and in 1884, \$14,400,000, an increase of about 140 per cent. As to the numbers, I observe that the hon. First Minister the other day stated that we compared favorably in that respect with the United States. But that was a statement made on very inaccurate information indeed, because the number in proportion to the number of traders in Canada was one in fifty, while in the United States it was only one in eighty-four; and it would be difficult even for my hon. friend from Beauce (Mr. Taschereau) or my hon. friend from Cumberland (Mr. Townshend) to make out that that was a sign of comparative prosperity. The bank returns show similar results. The current commercial loans have decreased over eighteen and a-half millions between 1882 and 1884, and the larger portion of the decrease has taken place in 1883. Overdue debts have more than doubled between 1882 and 1884. They were \$3,190,000 in 1882, and \$4,400,000 in 1883, and \$6,440,000 in the year which has just expired. The circulation has decreased more than four and a-half millions between 1882 and 1884. Public deposits have decreased about the same

amount in the same period. Government deposits have decreased about one-half—in fact we do not know where the money has gone. On the whole I maintain, notwithstanding the smooth phrases of my hon. friends, that the condition of the country in the large is one of dullness and depression; of stagnation, of short hours, of reduced wages, of diminished occupation for working men, of lost capital, of vanished opportunities, of hard times generally; and hardest chiefly in those industries which were but a while ago the chief and prime glories of the hon. gentleman's fiscal policy. Take the cotton industry. In New York the First Minister was candid enough, I observe, to admit that there was a little trouble in cotton, but when he got to England he almost forgot the existence even of that trouble, and stated that there was a condition of tolerable general prosperity. Take the iron industry; take the sugar industry; take important branches of the woollen industry; I will give as an example the general production of knitted goods. All these but a short time ago were cases for the application of unbounded praise to the fiscal policy of the Administration, which had, it was said, revived and almost recreated these industries, and put them in a position of stability, permanence, and great prosperity. What is their condition to-day? What has it been for the past year? Does any man doubt that there has been an immense premanent loss of capital in the cotton industry? Does any man doubt that there has been an unproductive diversion of capital in that industry, and of sugar refining, as well as in the industry of knitted goods? There is another great industry—an industry which if you take the value of the output may be said to be almost the largest—the flour milling industry. I do not perceive that the millers are entirely contented with the present Tariff. The degree of Protection the hon. gentleman has given them does not seem to satisfy them. On the contrary they seem to be so blind as to suppose that they are discriminated against. They are so foolish as to allege that there is a posi-

tive premium placed on the importation of flour in place of wheat from the United States; and I see that they are presenting a petition, whether to the Government or the Parliament I know not, asking that the duty on flour should be raised to a dollar a barrel, and I observe that the Finance Minister has more than once stated lately that serious consideration would have to be given to the difficulties of the milling industry. Having stated so much generally with reference to the condition of the country, I would allude again to the City of St. John. It is the constituency of the Finance Minister, and in its fate and fortune he is no doubt specially interested. I do not believe things have been so bad in the City of St. John for forty years as they have been in the last year, and I do not believe the hon. gentleman would find his old and faithful friends in that city rally around him in support of his policy, even though they might do so in support of himself individually. I believe they have had some amongst the saddest and most difficult experiences of the failure of the hon. gentleman's policy to do the great things which he promised it would do. Take the capital City of Nova Scotia, the City of Halifax, and ascertain what its condition is. Ascertain in each case what is the condition of the specially-protected industries. Look at the cotton industry of St. John; look at the cotton industry of Halifax, the sugar industry of Halifax, the West India trade of Halifax which this policy was going to do so much to develop. Go to the far West and look at the City of Winnipeg, and see what is its condition this year as compared with the last? Manufactures, of course, have not been developed there; but take the returns of Customs duties, of populations, of assessment, take the general condition of the people, and tell us whether Winnipeg has prospered. And so, whether you go to the far East or to the far West on this side of the Rocky Mountains, can you find prosperity? Take the old City of Quebec, and notwithstanding the statement of the hon. member for Cumberland that the timber and ship-building industries are flourish-

ing in Nova Scotia, I ask what is the condition of these industries in Quebec? There is another view, however, not quite so pleasant, which the hon. gentleman overlooked when he told us of the change that has taken place in the system of construction of ships in Nova Scotia, and that is, that it is found that the wooden sailing ships of the tonnage formerly prevalent can no longer live, that they cannot do a business to keep them afloat, and that vessels of larger tonnage for longer voyages have to be constructed. There has been a change in the system owing to a change in the times. In the long struggle between steam and sail and between wood and iron, it is found that the only chance for wood must be in vessels of large tonnage and built for long voyages, and if so, ships constructed before that change took place must be doing an unprofitable business. So, when the hon. member for Cumberland spoke of the large amount of tonnage employed and said it was in an active condition, I must say he surprised me, because it is the common talk of the world that there has never been a time when tonnage was so unprofitable as it has been in the last year. It is certain that there has been a great over-production in the world's tonnage. It is also certain that freights were never lower and that ships are carrying freights at prices which cannot pay. It happened only the other day that there were tenders for carrying a certain lot of stuff from Liverpool to London, and an Atlantic liner agreed to carry it by way of New York for six shillings. That is the state of the shipping industry of the world when the hon. member for Cumberland finds cause for congratulation in the state of the shipping industry of Nova Scotia. The hon. member having told us that his province was flourishing so greatly, it was natural that out of the abundance of his heart he should have had regard for the poor Province of Ontario. I thank him for his consideration when, in expressing the hope that the article of coal should be admitted free into the United States, he coupled with it the

reservation that he would have regard for the Province of Ontario, and that he should not like to have the price increased by the removal of the present duty on that article imported by us from the United States. I do not know whether the hon. member's remark was serious or a joke. If a joke he will allow me to say that it was not a very good one; if serious, I will not waste time upon it. Take the City of Montreal and see how it fares. To go a little farther west than Montreal, take the town of Cornwall, one of the glories of the National Policy, a place the hon. first Minister was good enough to visit shortly after 1882, and find the condition of the main industry in that town. Go to the City of Kingston, to Cobourg, to Oshawa; go even to Toronto, which has had exceptional opportunities of prosperity and growth, and which has fortunately only a few protected industries. It is true we have a couple. We have the bolt works, but they are shut up—yes, they bolted, as my hon. friend from East York, Mr. Mackenzie, says; we have also the glucose works, but they were not opened. Other industries we have, and they are in a happier condition. Then take Hamilton, Dundas, London, St Catharines, Guelph, Chatham—it would be too tedious, Sir, to prolong the list, but with very few exceptions you will find that the story of the cities and towns and industrial centres of Canada is the same everywhere. It varies in degree, but it is the same in kind; it is one of difficulty and depression instead of life and animation. No wonder. The hon. gentleman as I have said, has done what he could to disarrange the natural progress and growth of these industries, and we have in the lumbering industry, the farming industry and notwithstanding the statements of the hon. member for Cumberland, the fishing and shipping industries, great sources of difficulty, partly owing to this process of disarrangement. You could not give that permanent prosperity you talked of, but you could take it away, you could shorten it, and that you have done. The Speech rather regrets than otherwise the

diminution in imports, but it announces, I observe, that notwithstanding that circumstances and notwithstanding the lessened prices and volume of imports, the revenue exceeds the expenditure. At the close of the financial year a surplus was announced of about \$1,600,000,—\$700,000 from the other sources of the revenue, and \$900,000, in round figures, from Dominion lands. The expenditure on Dominion lands was omitted, and I am afraid it was very large, but as the hon. gentleman charges it to capital account, he finds it is of no account at all. We borrow the money to pay for the expenditure on Dominion lands which I am afraid was about \$700,000. This would leave a modest margin of \$200,000 as the net revenue from Dominion lands instead of \$900,000: or if you leave your revenue from Dominion lands intact, it would absorb the surplus from all other sources. Perhaps I am uncharitable, but I suspect the hon. gentleman of having put to capital account some of these railway aids which we have been granting so lavishly out of our revenues, from time to time, until to-day; and I shall look with some anxiety for the production of the Public Accounts to see whether this surplus, small as it is, compared with former surpluses, which the hon. gentleman gloried in, is real or in large part fictitious. With reference to the question adverted to in the Speech of the lessened price of imports, it is to be remembered that that circumstance is not of such great importance under the present as under the old *ad valorem* tariff, because now a very large proportion of the duties is specific, and you pay the same duty to that extent, however cheap the goods may be bought. But this is also to be remembered, that your revenue—although you very nearly produce an equilibrium between revenue and expenditure—is still very large. In 1879 and 1880 the imports were from \$82,000,000 to \$86,500,000, and the hon. Minister said they were too large and ought to be reduced. He said that one of the great sources of evil and difficulty in this country had been the expansion of imports;

he congratulated us on their being down to these figures, but he wanted and intended to bring them down still further in order to make things safe and tidy and comfortable. Now in this year of reduced imports they are \$30,000,000 to \$35,000,000 more than they were in the year when the hon. gentleman said they were too large, so that it is not for him, whose policy it was to make the imports smaller than \$85,000,000, to complain, because they are \$30,000,000 more than what he said was too much. If, on the one hand, the imports have decreased, and the revenue has diminished, on the other hand the hon. gentleman is getting but very slowly towards the realization of his policy which was to import less than \$85,000,000, because the imports are still \$30,000,000 more. But about the same time the hon. gentleman denounced the adverse balance of trade and gloried very much in the circumstance that in one year that adverse balance had been turned the other way, and I recollect well how the Ministerial organs generally crowed over that event. The good time had come and we were going to keep it up. We were going to keep up our exports and to keep down our imports. Well, that has not happened. At the time the hon. gentleman said he did it, he claimed to have succeeded, in pursuance of his policy, in so arranging that he had, I think, one or two millions exports over imports and he was happy. But if his policy is to be measured by his statement at that time, what sort of view must be taken when there is an adverse balance of \$25,000,000? Last year this was the adverse balance; and for the last three years the adverse balances amount to about \$75,000,000. In 1878 he declared \$13,000,000 was about the sum required for Customs duties to carry on the public service, and in 1881 he gloried in having obtained a revenue of eighteen and a half millions, which was a very handsome revenue and produced a very large surplus. This year the hon. gentleman has a Customs revenue of more than twenty millions, or

more than one and a half million greater than in the year 1881. Yet we learn now that the hon. gentleman almost seems to regret the revenue is reduced, for he says that notwithstanding its reduction he is still able to produce a modest surplus. Well, I admit the great growth of Canada in one respect; we have grown in many things, in various degrees, but there is one thing alone in which it may be said we have grown enormously—a growth, I think, almost too great to be natural and wholesome, though the hon. gentleman has thought differently. What I refer to is the amount of money we take out of the people in the way of Customs—an amount which has increased 50 per cent. Whether we have grown equally in any other respect, except in our ability to extract from the people their national life, I leave to the most ardent supporters of the Government, not to assert but to establish. Our public debt has increased very largely; we shall get the account very soon, with the engagements of the current year; and looking to those engagements which are to be added in the coming year, it is clear that there must be an increase of the public debt to a very large extent. That general result has affected our credit. Notwithstanding the great commendation of hon. gentleman opposite on the late loan, we find it drags; we find that it is a drug in the market; we find it stated in an important London paper the other day that a portion of it was taken by a few persons who hold it still, as they have been unable to unload. And that is the condition of things, arranged by the hon. gentleman, in which we have to effect the important operation of exchanging a very large proportion of our 5 per cent. debt in a very few months. I hope, however, Sir, that whatever the hon. gentleman else many have done with reference to our finances, he has been more careful of his investments than he was last year. I trust he has not invested any more money in banks like the Exchange Bank, and that no item of that description will reappear in our Public Accounts as an investment. All the circumstances which have since become

manifest to the general public with reference to the disgraceful management of that institution throw light upon what ought to have been the conduct and the policy of the Administration, when they lent, under the peculiar circumstances under which they did lend, that sum at the time at which they did lend it; and I cannot but conceive that the hon. gentleman will have a very difficult task, even in this House and to this House, in vindicating, with that added light, his conduct in that transaction. We seem to have stopped a good many gaps. We seem to have filled up money voids. We seem to have handed over to Mr. Craig some \$300,000; and I suppose thus settled that little gap that was made in that anomalous account which placed a sum of about \$6,500 to the credit of the Conservative election committee, for I forget which division of Montreal, but I dare say the hon. member to whom it belongs will rise and say. Now, Sir, it was in this state of things with reference to the country that the first Minister in England in November last declared that at that juncture "there were in Canada no industries materially suffering and that every industrious man could get a good day's pay for a good day's work." It is indeed quite true that the hon. gentleman has assumed a new *rôle*. Who does not remember the diatribes that were uttered against my hon. friend from East York (Mr. Mackenzie), and those who acted with him when they modestly said that they thought it was of some consequence to Canada that it should be a cheap country to live in? Who does not remember that we were almost told it was a disreputable thing to have a cheap country to live in—cheap and nasty—that what was wanted was a dear country to live in and plenty of money to pay the high prices? That was the argument, and it was said that the argument to the contrary, of its being of some consequence that the prices of commodities should be low and that people should pay as little as possible for what they wanted was a despicable argument, an argument to be swept away by the contempt of the hon. gentleman opposite.

But it is his own argument to-day. He repeats on two occasions the statement that we are suffering to-day from too great plenty. There is too much wheat in the country and so wheat and flour are too cheap; there is too much cotton in the country, enough for three times as many people as there are, and so we are suffering because cotton is too cheap; and so forth and so forth. Well, in part, of course, this is due to that general reduction of values which the hon. gentleman mentions in the Speech itself, which he declares exists, and which applies necessarily to imports and, by reflex action, to a considerable extent to home manufactures. For example, sugar. I read the report the other day of Connal's Stores in Glasgow for the close of the year, and I find from it that for the last few weeks of the year a fair quality of yellow refined sugar was retailed in Glasgow at a penny a pound, and this was not due to the fiscal policy of Great Britain, in the way of protection at all events. But I hear hon. gentlemen talking about relatively cheap sugar, not relatively cheap as compared with the price in England, but as compared with the price here a little while ago, and declaring that this is the result of their fiscal policy here. But the effect of these values being reduced, as far as their policy has affected them, is that, instead of there being a slaughter of the foreign goods to the prejudice of the foreign maker, there is a slaughter of the domestic goods to the disadvantage of the domestic maker. We have brought to our own doors, to our own homes, and amongst ourselves an unnecessary and abnormal degree of demoralization of trade, of depression of values, and of difficulty. The consumer is reaping a temporary advantage, it may be, which we know will not be a permanent one, which will very soon be disposed of; but, in the meantime what has happened to the industries the hon. gentlemen were so anxious to protect and secure, and to the workmen whose wages are reduced, whose numbers are diminished, whose days and hours of remunerative toil are

shortened? What is wanted in some of these industries is a blessing of one kind or another. There are natural or accidental blessings which may relieve the hon. gentlemen. A flood or a fire would relieve them. If we could sell some of our surplus cotton manufactories to an insurance company, that would relieve them. If we had a violent storm of some kind that would carry them away, that would help the thing a little bit. Short of that, we want what we are to have if what we hear is to be believed, a ring or a combination by which half the machinery can be kept idle and the other half worked, by which the operatives may be cut off to the extent of one-half in numbers, the rest worked, and by which the general consumer may be obliged, through the effect of the high tariff, to pay such a price as will remunerate the capitalist in respect first of the mill he is working, and secondly of the mill he is keeping idle. These are the things we want, and in regard to cotton and knitted goods I observe that there is some hope of something of the kind being accomplished. It is a difficult matter to accomplish, it takes time to arrange, and afterwards very often it is broken. Still, it is getting along, and by means of these natural or these artificial blessings it is possible that the hon. gentleman may be able to report some improvement in some of these industries at some other and happier day. While this is the condition of matters, we hear nothing now about the foreign trade. Oh, I beg the hon. member for Cumberland's pardon—we did hear a little of it from him—we heard that the export of manufactures had increased by \$43,000 over the last six months of the previous year. Has the hon. gentleman taken the average of the years before the present fiscal Tariff and compared it with the average of the years under the present Tariff, which was to develop our manufactures, and promote our trade? If he does so, he will find the comparison give a very different result. I know not the figures for the last six months. No doubt he has stated them correctly, but the excess which he gives,

not an excess over the figures of the old days, but an excess over those of 1883, is no indication of the improvement of trade. We heard in the past a great deal of the efforts made to encourage trade with foreign nations. We have appointed High Commissioners, first one and then another, specially to accomplish that object. We have had missions to France, Spain and elsewhere with the same view. As yet, however, there has been no result that we can ascertain, and I am entitled to assume, in the absence of any statement to-day in the Speech from the Throne, that there is no result—that there is nothing to be communicated to us. So with reference to that which is of course also foreign trade, but which naturally assumes an exceptional prominence in our eyes—reciprocity with the United States—we hear nothing except the statement that we are not to move, that we are to do nothing, that we are not to approach them, that we must wait until they approach us. It was our view, and we emphasised it last Session by a vote, that the approaching expiry of the articles of the Washington Treaty rendered it prudent to enter into negotiations with the United States upon the subject of the fishery arrangements between the two countries, and in connection with that, the subject of reciprocal trade between the two countries. The hon. gentleman caused that resolution to be rejected; he declared it was inopportune, and this policy of masterly inactivity seems to have been pursued until now. We have drifted along without effort, that we know of, that we are told of, to secure better results than are likely to accrue from the policy of drifting. Now the hon. gentlemen who have spoken, having found grounds for congratulation as to the past, and as to the present, found it very easy to be congratulatory as to the future, I am not surprised that when they were able to felicitate us upon our present condition they should come to a like conclusion with reference to our more immediate future. I hope that the early apprehension by the public of

Canada of the fallacy of the views of the hon. Finance Minister, their early reaching out to the conclusion that he was not a trustworthy guide, the determination which they evinced—not, indeed, until after there had been, under his advice, an unhealthy expansion, a diversion of capital from which we are suffering to-day, but still much earlier than he would have wished them to do—their reaching out, I say, to the conclusion that they must retrench and draw in, will enable us to pass through what one hon. gentleman has called the present crisis, to pass through the present period of depression, at any rate, within a period of not very protracted length nor of very great severity. But I do not believe that there are indications which would render it justifiable in members of Parliament, or in Ministers, to invite the commercial and the general community to launch out at this time. I believe that we have before us a year of considerable difficulty; I believe we have before us a year in which it will be requisite to exercise the virtues of prudence, of frugality, and of retrenchment in public and in private affairs, and that the true advice to give to the people is what I have just now suggested—not to befool them with statements as to their immediately returning into the state from which they have recently passed, but rather to point out the true method by which it is alone possible to accomplish a recurrence of good times. I am quite aware that the hon. gentlemen opposite, many of them, denounce statements of this description, that they declare that they are unpatriotic, that they declare that it is wrong to deal with facts as they present themselves to the mind of the speaker, if those facts be not grateful to their ears; but I believe that it is our duty not to exaggerate but yet to state facts, and the conclusions from them, as we really understand them, and that honest advice of that description is what we owe to our country; and therefore, notwithstanding these denunciations, I am determined, for my part, to tell the truth and shame—the Tories. Now, Sir, the second para-

graph of the Speech deals particularly with Manitoba and the North-West; and some later paragraphs with railways there and with the financial status of the Province. I am very glad to hear the account of the well-being, the hopefulness and content of the settlers there, which are said to have been manifested to the visitors from the British Association. We all cheerfully voted the supplies which were asked from this Parliament in order to carry out the projected visit of the British Association; we were all very glad that it took place; we all expected considerable benefit from it, and there was no dissenting voice as to the pecuniary arrangements that the Government proposed upon that occasion; but it did strike me as one of the most cogent proofs of the excellence of the hon. member for Cumberland, in that particular part of oratory to which I referred, namely, hyperbole, that he should have declared that no event in the history of Canada during the present century has been so important, or redounded so much to its advantage, as the visit of the British Association. I remember in my own experience a good many things, and I have read of many more which I conceived to have been of infinitely greater importance to our country, which have conduced more to its credit and prosperity than the visit of some two hundred, or whatever the number may have been, of eminent British gentlemen, could by any possibility accomplish. Now, Sir, the expectations of immigration, it is said, have been disappointing but by the hon. gentleman's account, not so very much. He says there were about 100,000 who came in. I shall not enter into the controversy which is going on from Session to Session as to the accuracy of these figures. We shall get them, and they will be analyzed in due time. But extravagant expectations of immigration were, no doubt, entertained. At one time we hoped great things from the Railway Co., and we were told when the contract was let that one of the burdens from which the country would be relieved was that of getting immigration

into the North-West, because the Railway Co. would do that for us. I have not observed, in any accounts that I have received, any large expenditures, as yet, by the Canadian Pacific Railway Company upon immigration, but I do observe *per contra* that our own expenditures have been very largely increased, and this year they will be found considerably to have exceeded half a million of money. Notwithstanding that glowing picture which the Speech gives of hopefulness, well-being and content in Manitoba and the North-West, I am obliged to reiterate the view that there have been great blunders and errors in the policy of the Administration, with reference to that country; that the railway monopoly, the policy as to other lines in Manitoba in the earlier years after the contract with the Canadian Pacific Railway Company, the locking up of large blocks of lands, the speculative sales which were made, and the operations of the Tariff, have all been extremely adverse to the creation and permanent existence of that condition of hopefulness, well-being and content which we all agree, is so essential to the growth of that country and the prosperity of Canada at large, greatly dependent, as it is, so large is the stake it has taken in that country, for its prosperity upon the prosperity of the North-West. The hon. member for Cumberland pointed out in a sentence an important fact. He says one cent of freight on a bushel of wheat to the farmer of the North-West is of the greatest importance; we must not handicap him in his effort to get his wheat to the markets of Europe. That is the great difficulty. That is the difficulty which we have got to surmount, a difficulty largely of our own creation, in view of the policy of the Government with respect to the whole C.P.R. The anxiety of the people of that country to obtain some other mode of communication, their anxiety to reach Europe by some other means, cutting off us of the east by a short run to Hudson's Bay, their proposals with respect to the expenditure, the zeal which they display in pressing the construction of that railway, are to my mind the strongest evidences of

the feeling that must exist there, as to the vital importance of procuring some other means of communication or some competition with respect to moving their produce. I was very sorry to hear—I suppose it was a half inspired utterance—the hon. member for Cumberland (Mr. Townshend), when, in referring to the expedition to Hudson's Bay he told us that whatever difficulties it might have evidenced as to its primary object, the establishing of the possibility of a route between the North-West and Europe, we had at all events to congratulate ourselves more than to console ourselves with the reflection that we had found a new salmon fishery. That will, indeed, be balm to the people of the North-West. I am very glad under these circumstances to hear, and I hope it is not now too late, that a liberal land policy with respect to railways in the North-West is about to be adopted. When the Pacific Railway Company was chartered we were told that it would supply us with branch lines; that a very large proportion of the land grant was to be taken from districts off the main line, and that interest and policy would necessitate their building the branches; and in the earlier days, after the execution of that contract, they adopted that view themselves and they projected very lengthy lines—I cannot now give you the mileage, but in one year the projects transmitted to the Minister covered more than one thousand miles of branch lines. But a change took place in their policy and in the policy of the Administration, and it was determined to make it the primary object, to the exclusion and sacrifice of the branch lines, in the meantime, to finish the ends of the line; and so, although something has been done by the company in that direction, something where it was necessary perhaps to meet competition, something where it was necessary to push to one side rival enterprises, something where it was necessary to provide another means of connection with the second line of the St. Paul, Minneapolis and Manitoba Railway, yet what has been done in that direction has been trifling compared

with the expectations which were held out to us, trifling compared with their own projects as laid before us some years ago. I cannot altogether blame them,—this policy having been adopted—because if all the resources they possessed, if all the money they could borrow and raise, were to be devoted to the construction of the ends of the line, it was clear there could be nothing left for the branches. One observation only I will make. Long ago in the last Session, I think of the Parliament of the hon. member for East York (Mr. Mackenzie), a proposal was made to grant liberal aid to local railways. That proposal has been the subject of much animadversion and criticism on the other side. Hon. gentlemen were going to do the thing a great deal better; they were going to help the railway companies and at the same time to make money out of it; they would not give the land away, not they; they would sell it at \$1 per acre and the company would make \$1 or \$1.50, and so both the railways would be benefited and the Public Treasury replenished. But now we find free grants are to be given to railways. I will add this caution to hon. gentlemen opposite. I hope, whatever arrangement is made with any railway for a free grant of lands, it will be coupled with such restrictions as will secure those lands being open for settlement at fixed moderate prices. I maintain that that is of vital importance. We have suffered enough in the North-West from not keeping that before us as a leading, cardinal principle in the land and railway policy of the country. To repeat it now would be more than a blunder; it would be a crime. I hope that the golden dream has not altogether vanished, and that it is not too late for the Government to have awakened to the necessities of the situation, because I have always believed that the rapid settlement of that country demanded numerous railways through it, and I stated in my place here years ago, that you might as well talk about rapidly settling the North-West with one cart road as with one railroad. The hon.

First Minister has not upon this occasion said anything in the Speech about the Canadian Pacific Railway Company—and for this much thanks. We were a little afraid there might be an announcement made to us. We were reassured by a statement lately made that the company had, during a certain period, made \$800,000 or \$900,000 of net profits. We were reassured by a statement that out of those profits the company would be able to pay its February dividend in excess of the guarantee dividend, \$625,000, making a profit to investors in that enterprise of from 11 to 12½ per cent., according to the rate at which they acquired their stock. We are glad to know by this fortunate omission in the Speech that we shall not be called upon to put our hands into our pockets again. We are glad to know that no demand for further help will be made; we are glad to know that the second final settlement is final, at all events for this Session, and that we have therefore nothing to apprehend in that direction with respect to the Canadian Pacific Railway. But while that is so, I had expected that the circumstances of the road, its approaching completion and the great through trade that is about to be developed, would have been the subject of a glorifying paragraph. I had really expected that when the hon. gentleman could extract so much sunshine from cucumbers as he has done with respect to those matters which he has put into the Speech, he would have certainly found, particularly when we regard the floods of oratory which we have heard within the last few weeks on this subject, something to say in regard to the completion, before we next meet, of the great Canadian Pacific Railway and with regard to its through trade, and the new impetus which is to be given to Canada. And the hon. member for Cumberland (Mr. Townshend) felt there was an omission there, and he bettered the Speech by himself introducing the subject and pointing out to us that the road was going to do great things for us, of which the Speech does not tell but of which

the Ministerial orators tell us. I hope it may be so. I hope the trade will be quite as large as the hon. gentleman depicted, and quite as profitable; but still I would have felt a stronger assurance had I found it certified by Ministers whose every prediction has hitherto been verified to the letter. There is one point on which I should like to have heard something, and that is with respect to the grades in the Rockies and the Selkirk Range. The time has now arrived when Ministers must have settled and approved the route of the road. I have more than once called their attention to the fact that the reports of engineers indicated that grades could not be obtained within the contract, and that there was no power in them to approve grades heavier than those specified in the contract. I trust no violation of the law has taken place, and that no grades have been approved or sought to be approved in excess of those which Parliament sanctioned, because it seems to me that a grave breach of the duty of the Administration to Parliament will have been committed, as well as a course taken which may be, in the future, extremely prejudicial to the permanent interests of the railway, if that result has taken place. Nor do we hear anything this time about the colonization companies. I am sorry for that. I had hoped to hear they had paid their instalments and that the Treasury was getting filled from their resources. Instead of that, a rumor is in circulation that they are calling for relief. It is actually said that they talk about a change; that they require some modification in their position, and that they make, as a basis for their application, the change in the policy of the Government with regard to branch railways. They say, if you are going to give branch railways lands free along their roads, the companies will sell them at prices at which people who have free lands can sell and make a handsome profit; and how shall we make a profit when we have to pay for our lands which will come into competition with these free lands at the disposal of railway com-

panies?; and therefore as you have conceded it for the others, so you should for the colonization companies. Under these circumstances it is to me a great pleasure and satisfaction to refer to solemn estimates, to ascertained and carefully calculated results, to feel that whatever difficulties may sometimes oppress my mind and make me rather gloomy as to the financial results of the lands in the North-West, we yet know that the Government, on an occasion when they were calling upon Parliament to take an important step, when they were demonstrating the consequences of that step, took their officers into their confidence, and obtained from them statements which reassured my sinking spirits. On the 4th of May, 1883, the late hon. Minister of Railways was about to address the House on the subject of the Canadian Pacific Railway, and on that day, doubtless with a view of confirming his own statements—as if those statements should need confirmation—read in this House a letter from the first officer of the hon. Minister of the Interior, which letter I have read several times in the last few months, whenever I felt low spirited about the financial results of the sales of our lands in the North-West. That letter is as follows:—

“OTTAWA, 4th May, 1883.

“SIR,—Having given the subjects my best and fullest consideration”—

You see how careful he was, Mr. Speaker.

“I estimate that the receipts of this department from the sale of agricultural and coal lands, timber dues, rents of grazing lands, and sales of mineral lands other than coal, with the royalties from the minerals, between the 1st January, 1883, and the 31st December, 1891, both inclusive,”—

Mark you the precision of detail. The 1st of January, and the 31st December, were both included in the calculation.

“will amount to not less than \$58,000,000.

“A. M. BURGESS.”

That, Sir, is testimony which makes me feel happy under the most desperate circumstances. We are sorry to observe that the receipts from Dominion lands this year do not quite come up to the

proportion. In fact, I am not aware of any particular year in which they may be said to have reached those figures. But doubtless the hon. gentleman was just stooping to conquer; he was withdrawing only to make the better leap; and what little has been done in the way of permitting arrears to accumulate in the North-West lands will be made good; the assurance given to Parliament by the Ministry will be implemented, and our debts will not only be paid but we will have a handsome revenue from the sale of North West lands—between the first of January, 1888, and the 31st December 1891, both inclusive. But while I feel thus assured as to the west, while I stick to my text and insist on its accuracy in spite of all difficulties, I am not so certain about the eastern part of our expenditure. One of the hon. gentlemen who have addressed the House—in fact both of them—alluded to the east. The hon. member for Beauce (Mr. Taschereau) said something about one east and the hon. member for Cumberland (Mr. Townshend) said something about another farther east, and it seems we have not received any assurance or statement as yet as to the effects of the policy of last Session in the east. What of the Short Line route? What of the Bill of last Session for reaching the City of Quebec? As to the arrangement for reaching that city one alternative of that arrangement was to take effect, if at all, within six months after the passing of the Act; the other within twelve months. I do not know whether the fatal hour has struck, but at any rate it approaches very nearly, and we begin to be anxious about the arrangement in that regard. As to the route of the Short Line we really thought last Session that we had something to say about it. Some of us were audacious enough to suggest that the people's representatives should have an opportunity of deciding whether the view of the Government after receiving the report of a competent engineer, was good or not, and that the route should not be finally fixed by executive action. We were poo-pooed. My hon. friend

who sits close to me (Mr. Laurier) tested the sense of the House on that view, but his motion was denied, the Government resisting it, and we were refused the opportunity. But I see something in the newspapers, which always are accurate, that seems to indicate that after all my hon. friend was not so far wrong. I see that something was said by the First Minister, and corroborated by the Minister of Public Works in the City of Three Rivers, in the county which he so ably represents, indicating that we were to see the surveys, that we were to have some opportunity of dealing with them, notwithstanding the decision which was reached last Session, which will be proved a wrong decision under the circumstances. To what do we owe this new light on the part of the hon. gentleman? Was it to reconcile his supporters, or why was it, that having us completely in his hands, having procured from this confiding Parliament the consent that he asked for, he should now say that he will be gracious enough to permit us to do our duty in the matter? From the hon. member for Cumberland (Mr. Townshend) we learned that nothing has been done in the far east, and that the counties of Cumberland and Pictou are in a sad condition by reason of that failure. Now that surprises me. I begin to lose faith in assurances, however positive and plausible. I had myself doubts about this matter; I expressed them frankly as I always do. I questioned the hon. gentleman's predecessor, the late hon. Minister of Railways, as to whether he had satisfied himself that the companies were all right that they were solvent, that the matter was *bona fide*, and the Minister of Railways assured me, with every positiveness, that it was all right, that he had satisfied himself as to the *bona fides* and good standing of the corporations, and that everything was going through. Now, the hon. gentleman from Cumberland says that his predecessor was all wrong. He assures me that nothing—no, that some small work has been done, which has not been paid for, and that the

poor laborers lack, and the storekeepers lack, and they call on the Government whom they have faithfully supported in two elections, notwithstanding the offer held out to them of a railway through the country—they call on the faithful Government to pay these debts and procure the construction of this railway. And has the line not gone to Cape Breton either? We had a positive assurance on that point, too. My hon. friend from Digby (Mr Vail) declared that he thought that the amount was too small, and I was obliged to say to him that the Minister of Railways had told us it was enough; and that the work was going to be done; that if we wanted more money to spend on railways we should spend it where it was wanted, but that he should not ask us to take more money out of the Treasury than was needed to secure the railway. Is the hon. gentleman really serious in saying that no arrangement has been made for the building of that railway? Whom shall I believe? As to the Manitoba settlement I am glad to hear that there has been another final settlement in that Province. But I want to know if it is final for this year only, or really final finally. There are some things which it is utterly impossible to settle finally. You cannot provide finally with reference to that Province on the population basis. And with regard to that question, I suggested, two or three years ago, that there should be more frequent census adjustments of the population subsidy to that Province. But, apart from that, there was no reason why these matters should not have been settled once for all. I see, however, that the hon. gentleman declares that we shall have a Bill to confirm the settlement as soon as the Local Legislature has accepted it. Therefore, I presume that the Province is to be called upon to deal with the matter in the first place, and I am not called upon to pronounce upon the merits of this settlement until the details shall be laid before us. But I am very glad to see that the hon. gentleman has succeeded again in conciliating his stern opponent, the Premier of that Province, and actually capturing his

confidence. We are treated with the statement, for the third time repeated, that we are to have a representation Bill, and I suppose the third time is the charm, because twice before we have had it up to a certain point, but no farther. I trust, however, that as the story goes that this is to be a very short Session, the hon. gentleman will have reconsidered the provisions of that measure as introduced on two former occasions, and that he will have taken heed to the objections rather suggested than elaborated; because it was not proper that the measure should have been fully discussed until the hon. gentleman opened that discussion by an expository speech in introducing the measure, which he has never yet made, I hope that the measure introduced will be more satisfactory than the former one was. For my part, I declare my unswerving adhesion to the view, notwithstanding the statements of the hon. gentlemen who have spoken on this occasion, that simplicity, economy, convenience and the public welfare are to be served most by our adopting, until there is some good reason given to the contrary, the franchises of the Local Legislatures. I shall not anticipate that question, but I maintain further that a measure which proposes, as the former measures of the hon. gentlemen proposed, that persons to be appointed by the executive of the day shall practically control the revision of the voters' lists, is a measure that should not be accepted by a free and independent Parliament. The hon. member, Mr. Speaker, was very much pleased with the paragraph in the Speech with reference to the question of Chinese immigration, and thought it evinced great care and great diligence on the part of the Administration in the prosecution of their duty. I am not surprised that the hon. member for Cumberland, who is new to this House, should have apprehended the state of the case somewhat differently from the way in which some of us are disposed to look at it; because I find that in the commission to which reference is made in the Speech a most inaccurate recital has been

made of the facts of the case. That commission, speaking from memory, as it was published in the papers, was issued upon a report of the First Minister to the effect that a motion which had been made in this House on the subject of Chinese immigration had been withdrawn upon a pledge made by the Government that they would issue such a commission. Now, this is wholly incorrect, and I am astonished that the hon. gentleman should have so soon forgotten the events of the Session, or that he should have trusted to his memory, and not have referred to the record. It is quite true the hon. gentleman used his most persuasive tones to induce the withdrawal of the motion. It is quite true he asked my hon. friend, who is a supporter of his, and who was pressing on the motion very earnestly, to withdraw it, but he was not successful on that occasion. The hon. gentleman insisted, and the First Minister then proposed some slight modification of the terms of the motion, or of the amendment moved by the hon. member for North Grey (Mr. Allen), and with that amendment the motion passed. So far then, from this commission issuing upon a pledge of the Government, the fact is that we unanimously resolved "that in the opinion of this House it is expedient to enact a law restricting or regulating the incoming of Chinese into the Dominion of Canada." That was the state of the case at the close of the Session; that motion was carried with the assent of the Government; and now we are informed that a commission has been issued, that the report is nearly ready, and that it will be presented to us during the Session, which I suppose is intended to convey to those interested in this subject that they shall see the report, but the measure which the House agreed should be brought down, and which it was understood should be brought down this Session, will not make its appearance. I do not think, Sir, the report ought to be delayed. There is one member of the Government at any rate—the hon. Secretary of State, who also fills the position of Commissioner—who cannot argue the

necessity of delay. Therefore, I hope, the report will come, not during the Session merely, but at once, so that we shall be in a position to grapple with the question in accordance with the resolution of the House to which I refer. The hon. member for Cumberland paid a very natural and graceful compliment to his predecessor—whom he will permit me to say we miss from his place this Session. His disappearance from that place is the practical result of the view taken by this side of the House last Session. We insisted that the holding of the two positions which that gentleman then held was inconsistent, inconvenient and improper. My hon. friend from Bothwell (Mr. Mills) moved a resolution indicating that it should not be continued; the hon. gentleman resisted it, and his usual majority sustained him; but immediately, after the close of the Session, the view we took prevailed, and the holding of the double office ceased. The office of Minister of Railways has not since been filled. For now a long time—for more than two years, if we except the actual period of the Session, during a considerable portion of which it was the opinion of a large number of the members of this House that the office was not filled either—at any rate by a member of Parliament—there has been no Minister of Railways practically. It is of some consequence to us to know, particularly when important transactions are taking place with reference to the Pacific Rail way route and other matters, that there should be a Minister of Railways. It is of some importance to us to know who should be the successor of the late Minister of Railways. It is of little consequence when a Robitaille a Robitaille succeeds, but it is of some consequence who should be the successor of the late member for Cumberland. Now, we are promised some measures, mostly of an amendatory character—measures to amend the Insurance law, the Civil Service Act, a Contagious Diseases measure, a North-West Census measure and a measure in relation to the North-West Mounted Police. These are indicated to us as some of the principal

subjects of legislation of the Session. But we find on both sides of the House—the hon. member for Cornwall and Stormont has shown that he found it too—that certain measures which were promised once or twice before are not mentioned. There is no Factory Bill promised, though, like the Franchise Bill, it adorned former Speeches from the Throne. The Franchise Bill survives, but we cannot say, in this instance, that it is the survival of the fittest. The Factory Bill seems to have disappeared, obviously, as the hon. member for Cornwall and Stormont thinks, for good. It surely is not among the *alia*, the other things which it was not thought worth while to mention in the Speech from the Throne, but which are to be brought forward as special plums in the pudding. Nor do we find anything more promised to the North-West than the census. I had hoped some measure would have been promised for the representation of the North-West Territories. That question was discussed in both branches of the Legislature last Session. My hon. friend from Huron (Mr. Cameron) brought in a Bill to provide for representation in the Territories, but the hon. gentleman does not see fit to offer them representation, and tells them instead he will count their numbers. Nor is anything said with reference to the grand Imperial schemes of which the hon. Minister lately declared himself a supporter. We had some reason to expect that when a gentleman in his position had announced, in his view, the importance of these schemes, they would, at any rate, have been brought forward in that Speech. But upon them nothing is said. I shall not, under these circumstances, discuss them, but I cannot pass by the occasion on which the hon. gentleman made statements on these subjects without protest, for my part, with reference to certain language which he used. When in England, as the First Minister of Canada, the hon. gentleman ought to have been particularly careful, if he chose to make allusions, to political opponents to make them with regard to accuracy and fact, and not

to have used his position unfairly, as I conceive he did, to discredit those who are opposed to him in this country. As reported in the English papers, he said in one of his speeches:

“The Canadian Liberal Conservatives are those who draw their inspirations from England, who believe in the English constitution, and would loyally follow English precedents. Opposed to them we have the Liberal party, but they are not the true Liberals. The majority are, I believe as loyal as any conservatives. They have an earnest desire to continue the union which happily exists between Canada and the Mother Country, but they do not draw their inspirations from England. We have no contiguity to a great nation, to a people who speak the same language, deal with us and trade with us, and it is therefore very natural that their institutions should offer some attractions to a considerable body of our people.”

I maintain that was an inaccurate statement of the opinions of the Liberal party. I maintain that the Liberal party has a well settled and reasonable preference for that system, as more flexible, as giving earlier and apter opportunities for the triumph of the popular will, which we have here according to the British Executive and Parliamentary plan, than it has for the Presidential system which prevails on the other side of the line. I have never heard any gentleman who represented in any shape any section of the Liberal party or any constituency in the interest of the Liberal party, express a preference for the Presidential as opposed to our Parliamentary system, and I maintain it was an unfair use to make of the position the hon. gentleman occupied in England, that he should make a statement eminently calculated to discredit in that country his political opponents and without any foundation in fact. At the same time, the hon. gentleman was good enough to say that:

“Any Englishman, in coming to Canada, if he was a man of education, invariably joined the Canadian Conservative party, no matter what his home politics may have been.” I do not know, I am sure, under what circumstances the hon. gentleman made

such a statement, but I say he inflicted a gross insult on a very large portion of the most intelligent part of this community, who have come from England, are educated men, and are warm adherents of the Liberal party. The hon. gentleman made another statement on the same occasion. In giving what he thought was a historical *résumé* of past history, he declared, with some very violent language which I will not read, for we are accustomed to it from the hon. gentleman, that the conduct of the Liberal party had been that of demagogues in Canada, and then he went on to say :

“And they charged Sir George Cartier with being little better than a French speaking Englishman.”

That was the climax of the hon. gentleman's attack upon us, that we had charged Sir George Cartier with being no better than a French speaking Englishman. Why, I fancy, if the hon. gentleman's audience had been present when Sir George Cartier was in England on a former occasion, they would have heard him making the same statement. That was Sir George Cartier's public statement frequently made with reference to his position. But the hon. gentleman turns this statement, which came from the lips of his own colleague, into a dreadful accusation hurled at him by political opponents. I hope the hon. gentleman, on future occasions, when in England, will be a little more accurate when he attempts to describe the actions and conduct of his political opponents. The hon. gentleman ought to have remembered, when he gave that account, which I have read, of the principles and views of the Liberal party, that the only man of the quondam annexationists of 1849 now prominent in public life, is Sir David Macpherson, a colleague of his own. He ought to have remembered that the most prominent advocate of independence in Canada was a former colleague of his own, Sir Alexander Galt, his Minister of Finance for many years, who declined to receive the honor of knighthood except upon the distinct understanding that he held views on independence which he would be at perfect liberty to uphold ; and

who denounced the hon. gentleman in 1875, but, as a repentant sinner, was afterwards received into the services and embraces of the sinner he had denounced. Under these circumstances, it became the hon. gentleman to make such attacks as he has made in the absence of those whom he was aspersing. Besides the absence of those subjects in the Speech, there are some other little omissions. The hon. gentleman found place in the Speech from the Throne for the decision of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council in Russell and the Queen. There has been a greater decision since then. There has been a decision on the boundary question. The Russell case settled a point of law with reference to what the hon. gentleman thought were the relative jurisdictions of the Dominion and the Provinces. The boundary case decided the fate, as the hon. gentleman described it, of a kingdom, and yet we find no statement of it. There is much said upon this subject, which I am a little compelled to disagree with. People seem to think that the issue is very different from what I have always thought the issue to have been. A great question has been settled ; a question between Canada and one of the Provinces ; a question promoted by this Administration, from one point of view, which it afterwards thrust upon one of the Provinces, and which has ultimately been decided adversely to this Administration. I say adversely to this Administration. The issue was, as to what the boundary of Ontario was, and upon that subject, as long ago as March, 1872, the Government presided over by the hon. gentleman made this declaration with reference to that boundary :

“The boundary in question is clearly identical with the limits of the Province of Quebec, according to 14 George III, chap. 83, the Quebec Act, and described as follows * * * Extending along the river Ohio westward to the Banks of the Mississippi (that is the junction of the two rivers) and northward to the southern boundary of the Hudson's Bay territory. The southern boundary of the Hudson's Bay territory is well understood to be the Height of Land dividing the waters which flow into Hudson's Bay from those

entering the valley of the Great Lakes, and forming the northern boundary of Ontario." Therefore the position the hon. gentleman took at that time was that the boundary of Ontario was the due north line from the junction of the Ohio and the Mississippi on the one part, and the Height of Land upon the other part. The Government of Ontario stated its view in the course of that correspondence, which was practically the boundary of the Lake of the Woods to the westward and on the north a line to the northward of the Height of Land. Then the hon. gentleman, on the 17th November, 1872, reported, stating this:

"The northern boundary of Ontario the Government believe to be the line of the watershed separating the waters that run towards Lake Superior from those which run towards Hudson's Bay, and the western boundary a line drawn in accordance with the provisions of 14 Geo. III., chap 83, from the conflux of the Mississippi and Ohio rivers northward, that is, by the shortest northward course to the southern boundary of the Hudson's Bay territory."

These, Sir, were the two statements of the Administration on that subject. Then there came an attempt to ascertain what the boundary was, and the arbitration was arranged, and the award took place, and the hon. gentleman, in opposition to the contention from this side of the House, that the award ought to be accepted declared that it should not be accepted. Why? Because he said it was all wrong, that we ought to have an entirely different boundary from that which was found by the award. He said this:

"They"—that is the Dominion Parliament or Government—"say it is not a true boundary—that the Dominion wants simply what by law is their right. The Ontario Government asks and Legislature have no right to ask more but they say, no. They passed a law accepting the award, because they saw it added an additional kingdom to Ontario, as was the remark of its Premier, and they will not do anything else. Once again:

"The effect of settling the boundary between these Provinces will compel I do not say the Province of Ontario, but the present Government of Ontario, to be reasonable,

and not to insist upon a boundary which cannot be supported in any court or tribunal in the world. They will come to terms quick enough when they find that they must do so. To use an expression which is common in Scotland, it is land hungry they are for that country, and they are resolved to get it rightly or wrongly."

Then again:

"Nor is it the duty of the Dominion Government to accept their idea of the facts; because, according to my idea, the whole case was given away before the arbitrators. Anybody reading the case would see that it was most wretchedly managed on the part of the Dominion. An inferior man, though a respectable man in his way, Mr. McMahon, was chosen to conduct the whole case, instead of employing the first legal ability in the country—instead of the Minister of Justice himself conducting the case before the arbitrators. The whole case was thrown away—it looks almost as if it was deliberately thrown away. Never was such a case so given away as the case of the Dominion was on the very face of it."

Now we find that this subject is once more discussed; but before it was discussed, and at the very time at which this debate took place from which I have been reading these extracts, the hon. gentleman was arranging to thrust the issue upon a sister Province and to hand over to Manitoba the controversy in which he had been, up to that time, himself engaged between the Dominion and Ontario, and the Province of Manitoba endeavoured to take possession of a portion of that which had been awarded to be, and is now found to be, territory of Ontario. And hon. gentlemen opposite said it was all right for the Province of Manitoba to take possession. And the Province of Ontario resisted the attempt of Manitoba to take possession of what is determined to have been Ontario's territory; and hon. gentlemen opposite said it was all wrong for Ontario to attempt to resist such a taking of possession—they ought, like good Christians, to have allowed the Manitobans to take possession of the territory which it is now established was all along their own. The question has been practically settled according to the award, as far as the committee have de-

cided. They have decided, it seems, not that the award was wrong, not that it was a conventional boundary, but that it was the real boundry. As far as the committ e have decided, the case was not given away before the arbitrators. deliberately or otherwise, and the issue which the hon. gentleman, in the year 1872, joined, as I have shown from these extracts, between the Dominion of Canada and the Province of Ontario, in which he contended for a due north line from the conflux of the Ohio and Mississippi as the western boundary and for the Height of Land as the northern boundary, as far as it is decided, so far as it is decided entirely against the contention of the hon. gentleman and in favor of the contention of the Province. Those oceans of learning and erudition which we heard poured out in the debates upon the subject in this House from supporters of the Administration seem to have been all wasted and thrown away, inasmuch as the decision has been altogether opposed to them. Yet the whole question is not settled. The hon. gentleman, for some reason or other, although it was agreed in this House that the reference should take place between the Dominion as well as Manitoba and the Province of Ontario, although it is said that there was an assent on the part of the Dominion to such a reference, at the end it seems withdrew, and so the decision only formally and effectually settles the question as far as the boundary of Manitoba and Ontario is concerned. Still one is led to the hope that, inasmuch as what has been declared by the arbitrators in effect settles the principles upon which the rest of the boundary ought to be determined, there will be no further controversy and the award will be accepted, in reference to the rest of it, on the principle which appears to have guided the Judicial Committee so far as it has gone. Nor is anything said to the hon. gentleman's attitude in regard to the lands. He has arranged another controversy with the Province; he is at issue as to the ownership of the lands in this territory. He has declared that, even if the territory

be within the boundary of the Province of Ontario, still the lands are the property of the Dominion. It will be important for us to know, if that contention is to be maintained, whether there is still to be a controversy, or whether this question is not to be, as I say it ought to be, at once settled in all its parts. There is yet another omission which is proper to be remarked upon—nay, there are two. The first is with reference to the Streams Bill. Since we last met here, there has been a decision of the Judicial Committee on that subject also. It was alleged by the hon. gentleman that the legislation in the Local Legislature, declaring what the law was, was not legislation; that it was robbery. He used language which, coming from anybody else, I should have said was strong. He said these things:

The Ontario Government, "dressed in a little brief authority, Jacks-in-the box, trampling on the man, as they said they would do, pleased Mr. Caldwell and robbed Mr. McLaren. An hon. member has stated that the Streams Bill was not intended for Mr. McLaren, but for general application. But it is mean of the sneak who creeps down the back stairs and steals the kitchen utensils, or the fellow who comes behind you and picks your pockets—they are men more to be despised than the highway robber. It would have been more manly if the Ontario Government had introduced a Bill to hand over Peter McLaren's property to Wm. Caldwell; they dare not do so, and therefore they passed a Bill respecting rivers and streams. It was a wretched, flimsy and transparent device; it deceived nobody, but it was only by being a public bully that the Government could introduce and carry it; otherwise there must be a petition. It had the effect of depriving Mr. McLaren of his property, under the pretence that it was in the public interest. Nothing more contemptible or sinister could be done by a Government or Legislature. It was a Bill to take from Mr. McLaren his property and hand it over to Mr. Caldwell. True, Mr. McLaren had spent, some say \$250,000, and hon. gentlemen opposite say from \$100,000 to \$150,000. I do not know how much it was—but it was Mr. McLaren's property. The river at that spot was not a navigable river, and the judge who heard the evidence and viewed the facts stated that it was clear that at the place where the improvements were made it was only not navigable but not floatable. It would scarcely allow a

plank or a slab to go down any more than upon a ditch. Caldwell's timber and logs could not go through there until the improvements were made. Mr. McLaren, with his usual industry and perseverance, in order to carry on his extensive business, made a dam and a slide out of his own timber, for his own purposes and on his own soil. Mr. Caldwell had no right to use it without his consent and without paying for it. It was absolutely the property of Mr. McLaren."

And again he says :

"Supposing an honest old farmer's wife should expropriate her neighbour's hen and say : ' I shall keep this hen, and you shall feed it right and see that it lays at the proper time, and I will pay you by giving you a share of the eggs. '"

Now that was the attitude of the hon. gentleman. But the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council have decided to the contrary ; they have decided that it was not Mr. McLaren's right to interfere with Mr. Caldwell's coming down this stream ; they have decided that the law was correctly declared by those who advised the local legislation ; they have decided, in fact, that the Bill which was said to be a means of taking away Mr. McLaren's property with an illusory compensation, was the only Bill that could protect him at all, or give him any reasonable compensation for the use of his improvements over property in respect of which there was a public easement under the existing law of the land. So the infallible disallowers who disallowed this measure on the ground that it was an unjust interference with Mr. McLaren's property, turn out to be all wrong, and the reason upon which they acted, insufficient as I conceive that reason to have been, turns out to have been no valid reason at all. I say insufficient as I conceive that reason to be, because I am convinced that upon the true reading of our constitution the mere circumstance that in the opinion of these gentlemen a different kind of compensation ought to be given, that the bill was interference with private rights, was no ground whatever for the exercise of the power of disallowance. But it turns out that the very basis of their action was an error. And yet, Sir,

we do not find any reference to Caldwell and McLaren in the Speech from the Throne. Then, Sir, there was the very case in which the hon. gentleman introduced this custom of giving an account to us of the decision of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council—the case of the license question. The license question was raised last Session on several occasions, but it was last raised on the floor of this House on the motion of our lamented friend, Frederic Houde; and I may say that all of us who watched his course here must receive the mention of his name with sadness. He has since passed from amongst us. He was a man of marked independence of character, of frankness, of honor, of indomitable spirit and energy ; and no man who has seen him here for these many years past but must have been touched by the exhibition of that spirit and energy which he made when he struggled against weakness and disease in the discharge of his duties in Parliament. We know that he exhibited that independence of character to which I refer in a very marked way, outside this House, with reference to the journalistic career to which he was attached. We have observed in this House, with what emotion he, on one or two occasions, separated himself from his friends, feeling that it was a painful thing to do, knowing that it was a painful thing to do, but rising superior to his emotions at the call of duty. And he was a man of great kindness of spirit as well. He was kind to all of us, opponents as well as friends ; and I cannot omit mentioning here the marked kindness and generosity of feeling with which, during many years, he treated myself who am now addressing you. More than once it has happened to me to receive from him, sitting on the benches opposite, before he came to sit near my hon. friend from Montreal East (Mr. Coursol)—I have received from him a little note, after I had said something that pleased him, expressing satisfaction with the way it was said, though not always concurring in the sentiments I uttered. Such was the spirit in which he treated his opponents, and the kindness

he exhibited towards them, I am sure was exhibited in a re-doubled spirit towards his friends. How would he, who has gone from amongst us, have rejoiced at the late decision in this case, the last of his efforts; how would he have rejoiced to see that by the unanimous decision of the Supreme Court the view which he took as to the law was sustained in the Speech. Now we have no reference to that, and yet it was an important transaction. Parliament, by a Bill, decided that there should be a reference of this subject to the Supreme Court. It was thought important enough to do so, and a reference was made. The Provinces were called upon to take part in the proceedings, and five, I think, did take part—the Province of Ontario, the Province of Quebec, the Province of Nova Scotia, the Province of New Brunswick, and the Province of British Columbia. From the Province of Manitoba, as we are aware by public documents, there had proceeded a protest against this license measure of the Government, although I do not observe that they took part in the case. I am not aware what was the attitude of the Province of Prince Edward Island. But we find most of the Provinces taking part in this transaction on one side, and the Dominion on the other; yet a transaction of that description, taking place under authority of that Act of Parliament, resulting, as it has resulted, is not thought worthy of being admitted into the Speech from the Throne. Why? Because the result is unpleasant to the hon. gentlemen, I suppose. Now, I ask the House, is it too late to retrace our steps? Remember that we meddled in this matter for one reason, and for one reason only, because it was said by the hon. gentleman that the local laws were waste paper, and that it was absolutely necessary that we should intervene. Remember that was the ground upon which he invited his supporters to sustain him in passing his Bill. Remember that that alleged necessity was wholly disproved by the decision in the case of the *Queen vs. Hodge*; that since that time the insistence of the

hon. gentleman that the local license laws were waste paper, has been by him withdrawn; that it has been admitted that they are valid, and therefore the pretence upon which Parliament was introduced to interfere has disappeared and disappeared forever. Remember that from that time out it was only as a point of expediency and policy and not as a necessity that we have been told we should interfere; that it has been admitted to be true that the local laws, which had been in force for seventeen years, were good and valid laws, and it was only because it was thought better in the interest of the whole Dominion that we should interfere, and if we could supersede them, invalidate them—submerge them, as the hon. member for Glengarry (Mr. McMaster), I think, said—by federal legislation. Remember that in this policy of interference, of abstraction from the Provinces of that which it was decided by the Committee of the Privy Council is their right, we, in this Parliament, are engaged in a conflict with each one of six out of seven Provinces; and I have no reason to suppose that the attitude of the Province of Prince Edward Island differs from the attitude of the other Provinces. Remember that we are engaged in an effort to take away, against the will of the Provinces of Canada, a right which they have been exercising—validly, as decided by the court of last resort—ever since Confederation. Remember, again, that since last Session, the Supreme Court has decided unanimously, not that the local laws are waste paper, as the hon. gentleman alleged, but that his Act is waste paper, that the Act which he passed because the local laws were waste paper is itself waste paper. And consider for yourselves whether it is useful, in the interests of this Confederation, to continue this struggle; whether it is calculated to strengthen the bonds of union, to strengthen our confidence in the federal system, to press this Parliament further in a controversy in order to take away from the several Provinces a right which is theirs that you may be able by legislation of your own to do

the same things which they are doing, according to your fashion, instead of theirs, and by that means, as the hon gentleman stated, submerge their legislation. I do think we ought to retrace our steps, that we ought not to prolong this controversy, that we ought to repeal the objectionable parts of the Act which the hon gentleman passed, and leave the Local Legislatures, according to the wants and wishes and the condition of public sentiment and opinion in each locality, to deal with the license question. I do trust that wiser counsels will prevail. I know full well that it would be a humiliating act for the First Minister. He made great pretensions. On the stump and else where he declared himself infallible. He declared he had never been mistaken, but had always been sustained. It was a foolish action. It was not necessary to have done it, and he should have allowed his followers to have sounded his praises in that regard rather than have sounded them himself, because just so soon as he began to do so defeat after defeat took place. Once he began boasting of his infallibility, day after day the hon. gentleman found that he was mortal and fallible like the rest of us. Is it not much better that we should acknowledge that we are all fallible, even if some are immortal, and decide that we will not continue this struggle to save the hon. gentleman's *amour propre*, but will leave the matter where it was for seventeen years, whence the hon. gentleman himself said he would never have dragged it, except under the belief

that it was necessary in the public good, because the local laws were only waste paper? Let the local laws remain. If I could hope that my words have any weight I would pray the House to recognize, though it may be late, our true position; to apprehend the fact that we are, and have been for some time, by our general policy, rather weakening than strengthening the true bonds of union; that our centralizing policy, our Tariff policy, our policy of high and sectional taxation, our policy of extravagant expenditure, has been and is alienating important elements in Canada from sympathy with the union itself; that it is our duty to recall the promises that were made to the various Provinces which were induced to enter into this union, the promises of economic government and of low taxation, the promises with respect to trade, the promises with respect to a fiscal policy, the promises with respect to expenditure, which were made particularly by the leaders in the Maritime Provinces at the time the union measure was brought before them; and that we ought to set about the initiation, I might almost say, of a true Federal policy, including, together with the practical recognition of the Federal principle, a reduction of expenditure and such a reduction of taxation as past extravagance permits; a policy suitable to our actual circumstances, instead of one based on hollow dreams, already proved untrue, and but too likely if persisted in to end in a disastrous waking.

